

# Evaluation of Gehlen by [ ]

1 December 1969

This evaluation is based on my personal experiences and contacts with Dr. S which started in 1945. During the last few years I have seen and spoken Dr. S. on a number of occasions. My last and rather long meeting with him was in June of this year.

I believe that the high opinion I have about Dr. S. both in terms of his political and professional integrity, is the result of the simple fact that I have never found throughout the many years I have known him that there was a discrepancy between what he told me and what he did.

I'm convinced that the major motivating factor for his decision to seek contact with the Americans, was his strong anti-communist conviction and his realization that only the U.S. would be in a position to muster enough strength to implement policies designed to stop the further expansion of Communist domination. Dr. S. had arrived at this conclusion, i.e. the necessity of working with the Americans, still during World War II.

I'm equally convinced that Dr. S. had and has no political ambitions what his own person is concerned and therefore any comparisons with other politically minded German military leaders of the past is an exercise in futility. As result of the development of the "Gehlen organization" which employed a good number of former professional officers (among them was a fairly high percentage of former General Staff Officers), Dr. S. found himself in a position of considerable influence when the Bundeswehr was founded and many of the top officers transferred from his organization to the newly established German armed forces. However, again I fail to see that Dr. S. attempted to exercise any influence beyond strictly intelligence matters and through his intelligence reports which provided part of the background material for German policy- and decision-makers in their dealings with the challenges presented by Soviet policies.

There were at least three good reasons for getting the collaboration of many professional officers especially during the early phase of the organization. Dr. S. had very good grounds to be highly suspicious of the operations and of the field organization as set up by Mr. B. In the persons of the former professional officers he had reliable personnel which could keep an eye upon the rather shady dealings of B. and of some co-workers. The second reason for getting military personnel was their technical or staff skills. And finally the third reason was that recruitment was markedly influenced by personal acquaintanceship in order to reduce security risks. The repeated assertion of the practice of "nepotism" within the organization, a charge which allegedly was also made by Chancellor Adenauer, must be evaluated in view of the difficulties to recruit dependable personnel. In my opinion, the motivation of Dr. S. when permitting or even encouraging the employment of relatives, was his concern with the security of his operation.

In many of my discussions with Dr. S. he expressed his life's ambition which simply can be stated as an effective contribution to maintain and secure the Western cultural heritage against Communism. He at times had serious doubts if many of the Western statesmen really understood the

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devious methods and tactics of the Soviet leaders and he also was annoyed by some of the lack of trust he experienced from the side of the Western Allies. However, he did not blame them for certain "friendly infiltrations" into his organization and operations. I recall that he gave me some specific illustrations and remarked that the "friendly side" could have obtained the same information by merely asking for it.

Dr. S.'s pro-Western attitude is based both on his preference for the political systems in the Western countries and on the realization of the common opponent or enemy. Throughout the many years of my acquaintanceship I have not once had reason to doubt his pro-Western, and especially pro-US attitude.

The question of the influence of former German military leaders upon Dr. S. was raised. It is my impression that neither Seekt nor von Schleicher had been mentioned by the Dr. as individuals who had merited his admiration. His condemnation of "party-generals" such as Keitel was most pronounced. He had great admiration for Halder, also regretted that von Blomberg was victimized. I presume that his opinion of Halder was caused by two factors, his personal integrity and professional proficiency.

While Dr. S. was - and still is - frequently pictured as a very cool and emotionless individual, I had the opportunity to experience his strong humane side. His concern for his employees always impressed me. Probably his deep felt opposition toward Communism derives from the same concern for humanity.

*I feel v. B was a v. foolish man (a view shared by his daughter incidentally) & while he did not deserve the treatment he got, he was not really victimized.*